Vehicle Operation Policy — Emergency

POLICY

THE RULE

1. Emergency operation is a means to respond and deliver care where delay may contribute to the patient's deterioration
2. You are asking permission to break traffic laws from other drivers — drive accordingly
3. Sterile cab: only essential communication
4. May exceed the posted speed by no more than 10 mph
5. Driver: safe operation of the vehicle, overall control of the siren, turning emergency lights on and off
6. Front passenger: be aware of surroundings; operate the siren with driver direction

WHY IT EXISTS

- Policies for operation of ambulances and support vehicles during emergency operation
- Used where situations are possibly life-threatening, or delayed/non-emergency response may contribute to deterioration
- The best drivers are always aware of their responsibilities, roadway characteristics, environmental conditions, and vehicle capabilities/limitations

APPLIES WHEN

- Responding to and transporting patients in possible life-threatening situations, using lights and sirens

EXCEPTIONS & EDGE CASES

- Avoid passing vehicles on the right; avoid driving into oncoming traffic — maximum 15 mph if you do
- Do not jump medians or lane dividers regardless of height; if unable to move forward, turn off lights and sirens and wait until safe to resume
- School zones: obey posted speed, school stop signs, and crossing guards; yield right of way to school buses with activated warning lights or signals
- Red light/stop sign intersections: come to a complete stop before entering, look in all directions for vehicles and pedestrians, proceed at maximum 5 mph with caution

DOCUMENT IT

- Not specified on the original page

Take Home Message:

Emergency driving buys minutes, not exemptions: ten over the limit maximum, a complete stop at red lights, five miles per hour through them.